

Dear Faculty, Staff & Students,

A Southwest Minnesota State University student employee has self-reported a case of COVID-19 (coronavirus) that is confirmed by the Minnesota Department of Health. The student worker is now isolating. Because social distancing protocols were in place, the student did not have any close contact to others on campus. My thoughts are with this individual and my wish for this student is a speedy recovery.

This is our first notification of a case of COVID-19, and we are thankful to this individual for their self-awareness and reporting their condition to the University. As access to diagnostics increases (both through clinical diagnosis or laboratory confirmation), so will the number of positive cases – both in the wider community as well as here at SMSU. If you feel ill, take care of yourself, seek medical attention, and follow physical distancing protocols.

In addition, I encourage you to report any COVID-19 health updates to the Provost's Office at 507-537-6246.

The safety, security and health of our faculty, staff and students is our top priority. As you know, we can all further protect ourselves and others by:

- Washing your hands often with soap and water; covering your cough and sneeze; avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Practicing self-care by eating a healthy diet and taking time to rest
- Frequently cleaning all commonly touched surfaces
- Avoiding large gatherings
- Staying home if you are sick

If you feel you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, The Minnesota Department of Health recommends:

1. Stay at home for at least 10 days, and for 3 days with no fever and improvement of respiratory symptoms – whichever is longer. (Your fever should be gone for 3 days without using fever-reducing medicine).
2. Use the CDC website on how to Care For Yourself at Home with COVID-19.
3. If your household contacts were exposed to you while you had symptoms, they should try to stay home as much as possible for 14 days.
 - a. They should closely monitor their health, and if symptoms occur, they must isolate themselves. More guidance on this can be found here: MDH COVID-19 Basics
 - b. Use the CDC website for How to Minimize Spread.

In accordance with the Clery Act, we will be sharing this information with the campus community via Star Alert.

This is a challenging time and I know many of you may be feeling stress or anxiety. Students, if you need additional support, there are resources available. Contact the Dean of Student's Office at 507-537-6844 or scott.crowell@smsu.edu as well as Counseling & Testing at 507-537-7150 or counseling.testing@smsu.edu. Faculty and staff, please continue to take care of yourself and, if needed, seek support through the [Employee Assistance Program](#) available to you at no cost. You can continue to find up to date information about [COVID-19](#) on our website as well as our [Mustangs Return](#) page.

We will get through this together as a community, and I assure you that our faculty and staff are dedicated to ensuring our students a safe and meaningful return to campus.

Take care,

Kumara Jayasuriya
President